

the best of luck in an enjoyable retirement and thank him for his distinguished service.●

RETIREMENT OF JOE ALSTON

● Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the service of the Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent, Joe Alston, who is retiring this week. Joe is a man of considerable integrity, ability, and achievement, and his presence at the Grand Canyon will be deeply missed.

After 31 dedicated years, Joe Alston is retiring from the National Park Service. He has spent the last 6 years serving as the superintendent of the Grand Canyon National Park, the crown jewel of Arizona and one of the Nation's oldest and most heavily visited National Parks. Joe has held a wide variety of positions in the Park Service beginning with his first job as a seasonal firefighter on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. In the years that followed, Joe worked as a concessions specialist at Yellowstone National Park and later became the chief of the Concessions Management Division in the Alaska Regional Office. More recently, Joe Alston was the assistant superintendent of Yellowstone National Park and eventually served as superintendent at several major National Park units such as the Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve, the Curecanti National Recreation Area, the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, and the Rainbow Bridge National Monument.

We are very fortunate to have benefited from the passion and expertise that Superintendent Alston brought to the Grand Canyon. Joe was challenged with many complex issues and long-standing conflicts ranging from park transportation to aircraft overflights, yet he has managed them all with foresight, thoughtfulness, and resolve. Under Joe's leadership, the Park Service saw the completion of the Colorado River Management Plan, which protects park resources by implementing a new river permitting system that balances competing commercial and recreational interests. Despite its highly contentious nature, it was Superintendent Alston's desire to hear and understand the views of river runners and other constituents by affording the public every opportunity to provide input during the CRMP planning process. Few superintendents in National Park Service history have undertaken such an open nationwide approach that concluded with such remarkable success.

The Grand Canyon has received many honors during Superintendent Alston's tenure. In 2004, Grand Canyon National Park was recognized for a number of environmental accomplishments by EPA Administrator Mike Leavitt, including having the first EPA certified Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design "green building" owned and operated in a National Park. Joe

was the driving force behind the implementation of new training programs that led to the reduction of visitor and employee injuries which earned the Park the Regional Director's Safety Excellence Award and the Director's Safety Excellence Award for Public Safety Achievement in 2005. Among the many accolades Joe has received over the years, perhaps the most noteworthy came in 2005 when Secretary Gale Norton awarded him the Meritorious Service Award, the second highest honorary recognition granted to Interior Department employees.

Joe Alston's ties to the Grand Canyon extend beyond his outstanding professional career. Indeed, the Grand Canyon also happens to be where he met his wife, Judy, who is a teacher with the Grand Canyon Public Schools System. Joe is regarded by those living in northern Arizona as an individual deeply connected to the community. Just last month, he accepted the Community Person of the Year award from the Grand Canyon Rotary Club for ushering in a new era of partnership between the communities of Tusayan, AZ, and Grand Canyon National Park.

My son and I had the distinct pleasure of hiking the Grand Canyon rim to rim last year with the accompaniment of Joe Alston. I can think of few others alive today who are as knowledgeable and devoted to the history and culture of the Grand Canyon than Superintendent Alston. I wish Joe the very best in his future goals and ambitions.●

SAINT PHOTIOS NATIONAL SHRINE

● Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. President, today I honor the 25th anniversary of the Saint Photios National Shrine, the only Greek Orthodox National Shrine in the country, located in Saint Augustine, FL.

As early as 1768 and under the leadership of Dr. Andrew Turnbull, Greek immigrants traveled to America to seek a better life in Florida. Many of these early Greek Americans migrated to Saint Augustine, where, over time, a strong Greek community has formed. Greek immigrants found refuge there as many gathered for solace, fellowship, and worship at the historic Averos House built in 1749 on Saint George Street. The Averos House was purchased by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese in 1965, and in 1982, was opened as a National Greek Orthodox Shrine named after Saint Photios the Great, Patriarch of Constantinople.

The Saint Photios Greek Orthodox National Shrine gives honor to the memory of the first colony of Greeks in the Americas and the succeeding generations of Greek immigrants; it now serves as a connection and pilgrimage point for Greek Americans and the Greek Orthodox Church in America. It also serves to preserve, enhance, and promote the ethnic and cultural traditions of Greek heritage and the teachings of the Greek Orthodox Church in America.

The Shrine continues to be faithful in maintaining and perpetuating the Greek Orthodox faith and Hellenic Heritage through its programs and activities to all who pass through its historic doors.

Mr. President, February 4, 2007, will mark the 25th anniversary of the Saint Photios Greek Orthodox National Shrine, and I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the purposeful commitment and achievements of this religious and historical institution.●

HONORING HANLEY DENNING

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, today I mourn the loss of Hanley Denning, a truly remarkable native of Maine who in word and deed represented the very best of our State and Nation.

Hanley was the visionary founder and executive director of Safe Passage, a Central American-based nonprofit agency which provides children who live in the Guatemala City garbage dump opportunity and hope through myriad forms, including education, nutrition, and health care. Hanley founded Safe Passage in 1999 after having seen children existing amid the squalor and destitution of refuse and trash. But where many would have seen a dead-end marked by desolation, Hanley saw a need which soon after evolved into a calling that required conscience and action. She imagined a pathway out—and possessed the will, determination, and resolve to forge a plan to begin making that route a reality. Hanley took a dilapidated church near the waste dump and developed a drop-in center where children could receive food and a safe haven.

Hanley found that access to education of any kind was not a possibility for children who couldn't begin to afford the enrollment fees, school supplies, and books required by the Guatemalan public schools—not to mention requisite school uniforms and shoes. But thanks to Safe Passage, children have been able to attend a local public school for at least a half-day term. And that experience is complemented by the additional educational reinforcement, care, and supervision received at the center. Whether it is homework, hands-on learning activities, nutrition, medical attention, or a range of other programs, these at-risk youth are recipients of the care they deserve. Today, remarkably, Safe Passage serves as many as 600 children ages 2 to 19 years old.

Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw once famously wrote that "You see things; and you say, 'Why?' But I dream things that never were; and I say, 'Why not?'" When Hanley saw despair, poverty, and indescribable hopelessness, she must have at first said, "Why?" But she responded to an unforgivable, intolerable situation—not with indifference, resignation, or anger—but by saying, "Why not?" Why not carve out a way forward for these children that leads from an abject condition to